

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A boot-band comprising a band body that is wound like a ring around a member to be clamped, and that has an outer-layer portion and an inner-layer portion, respectively, at its two ends, with the outer-layer portion being overlaid over the inner-layer portion,

engagement holes that are formed in the outer-layer portion,

engagement pawls that are formed on, and that protrude outwardly from, the inner-layer portion and that are to be engaged with their corresponding aforementioned engagement holes so that the band body is held in a fastened state,

a first boot-band pawl that is formed on the outer-layer portion nearer to the longitudinally outer end of the band body than are the engagement holes are,

a second boot-band pawl that is formed on the inner-layer portion and that is to be engaged with the first boot-band pawl, and

a pressure-reduction ~~[[means]]~~ arrangement that is formed in the outer-layer portion in such a manner that said pressure-reduction ~~[[means]]~~ arrangement reduces the pressure applied on the engagement pawls of the inner-layer portion when the outer-layer portion climbs over the engagement pawls just before the first and the second boot-band pawls are engaged, wherein

said pressure-reduction arrangement is structured such that an engagement-hole formation area, which is formed within the outer-layer portion and which contains the engagement holes, is separated, by cut lines along the longitudinal sides of said engagement-hole formation area, from the remaining, surrounding area of the outer-layer portion, and that said engagement-hole formation area rises up from said inner-layer portion.

2 - 6. **(Cancelled)**